

Message Text

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ACTION EUR-25

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-07 H-03 INR-10 L-03

NSAE-00 NSC-07 PA-04 RSC-01 PRS-01 SP-03 SS-20

USIA-15 ACDA-19 SAJ-01 SAM-01 OMB-01 TRSE-00 IO-14

EB-11 DRC-01 /148 W

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R 091233Z MAY 74

FM AMCONSUL MUNICH

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 5006

INFO AMEMBASSY BONN

USMISSION BERLIN

AMCONSUL FRANKFURT

AMCONSUL BREMEN

AMCONSUL DUSSELDORF

AMCONSUL HAMBURG

AMCONSUL STUTTGART

C O N F I D E N T I A L MUNICH 0699

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PGOV, PINT, GW

SUBJECT: REACTION TO BRANDT RESIGNATION

1) FIRST REACTIONS IN MUNICH WE HAVE BEEN ABLE TO GATHER TO RESIGNATION OF WILLY BRANDT, WHILE GENERALLY SIMILAR TO THOSE REPORTED BY OTHER POSTS IN GERMANY, ARE TO A DEGREE CONDITIONED BY SPECIAL BAVARIAN CIRCUMSTANCES.

2) FIRST OF ALL, RESIGNATION APPARENTLY CAME AS COMPLETE SURPRISE TO BAVARIAN PUBLIC, HAVING BEEN ANNOUNCED ON RADIO ONLY AFTER MIDNIGHT AND MAKING ONLY LATE MORNING PRESS EDITIONS. HOWEVER, VERY LITTLE SENSE OF SHOCK APPARENT, WITH MOST PRESS AND INDIVIDUAL COMMENT LEANING TOWARD ANALYSIS THAT BRANDT WAS WORKING UP TO RESIGNING IN ANY CASE AND THAT THE GUILLAUME AFFAIR REPRESENTED ONLY LAST STRAW. SPD CIRCLES IN BAVARIA HAD BEEN STRONGLY CRITICAL OF WHAT THEY CONSIDERED BRANDT'S RECENT INACTIVITY,
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SOFTNESS, AND LASSITUDE IN ALLOWING PARTY AFFAIRS TO DRIFT

DOWNWARD. WHILE THERE IS CONSIDERABLE PERSONAL SYMPATHY FOR BRANDT AS A MAN OF IDEALS AND HIGH PURPOSES, THERE IS LESS CONCERN THAN MIGHT BE EXPECTED OVER POSSIBLE DAMAGE TO SPD CHANCES IN BAVARIA. AS A MATTER OF FACT, SOME SOURCES WE HAVE BEEN ABLE TO CONTACT IMPLY THEY EXPECT SPD TO BE REINVIGORATED BY SCHMIDT, WHO IS GENERALLY REGARDED AS TOUGH, CANNY POLITICIAN.

3) WHILE HANS JOACHIM VOGEL, BAVARIAN SPD LEADER, WAS EXTREMELY CLOSE TO BRANDT PERSONALLY AND IS REPORTED ACTUALLY TO HAVE WEPT WHEN NEWS OF RESIGNATION REACHED HIM, MOST OBSERVERS BELIEVE THAT HE WILL FIND SCHMIDT'S TOUGHNESS AND ORGANIZING ABILITY MORE CONGENIAL TO HIS OWN MODUS OPERANDI, ALTHOUGH THE TWO MEN ARE NOT PERSONALLY CLOSE. THERE HAS FOR SOME TIME BEEN A QUESTION WHETHER VOGEL'S RECENT ATTACKS ON JUSOS INSIDE BAVARIAN SPD ORGANIZATION WERE FULLY APPROVED AND SUPPORTED BY BRANDT; NO SUCH DOUBTS ARE EXPRESSED IN CASE OF SCHMIDT. BAVARIANS EXPECT VOGEL'S NATIONAL POSITION TO BE STRENGTHENED IN TERMS OF CABINET POSITION AND PARTY INFLUENCE, EVEN THOUGH THERE IS FAIRLY WIDE RECOGNITION OF HIS UNDISTINGUISHED PERFORMANCE THUS FAR AS MEMBER OF FEDERAL CABINET; REASONING IS THAT, WHATEVER SCHMIDT MAY THINK OF VOGEL PERSONALLY OR AS CABINET COLLEAGUE, THIS IS NO TIME TO OFFEND BAVARIANS OR JEOPARDIZE WHATEVER POSSIBILITIES MAY EXIST FOR SPD GAINS -- OR AT LEAST NO MORE THAN MINIMAL LOSSES -- IN LANDTAG ELECTIONS THIS FALL. SPIVACK

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TAGS: PGOV, PINT, GE, (BRANDT, WILLY)
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